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ABSTRACT

In order to determine the biographical characteristics of Connecticut community college graduates, to identify their educational and career objectives and experience, and to investigate the attitudes of graduates toward their community college experience, a survey instrument was designed and administered to 2,911 June 1975 graduates in transfer, occupational, or general curricula. In all, 1,405 graduates responded (48 percent). The age distribution and enrollment status of the respondents indicated that the colleges are serving a diversity of students. The graduates' initial reason for enrolling varied from obtaining a degree and transferring, to job retaining. Nearly 40 percent indicated that they had originally planned to take only a few courses of interest, but instead had remained to complete their degree requirements. About 75 percent were currently employed, most of these were employed full-time, and 60 percent were employed in jobs related to their community college programs. Job satisfaction was rated superior or good by nearly half of the respondents. Half of the respondents indicated that they had transferred to a senior institution. Overall, the graduates had a very favorable attitude toward their community college education. The survey instrument is appended. (Author/NHM)

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CONNECTICUT REGIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF

JUNE 1975

GRADUATES

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May 1976

JC 760 289

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CONNECTICUT REGIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES
GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP STUDY
1975

Statement of the Problem

Connecticut's Master Plan for Higher Education 1974-1979 and the Connecticut's General Assembly Program Review Committee Report on Community Colleges (1974) emphasize the importance of establishing formalized procedures for conducting a review of the relevance of the education programs offered by the Regional Community Colleges. These reports emphasize, that in order to plan effectively, all colleges, when developing new programs or considering the deletion of obsolete programs, need to have available to them the most recent and accurate information on current programs. The Follow-Up Study of June 1975 Graduates seeks to employ graduate response data in the evaluation of the quality of career development, transfer, guidance, counseling, and placement in the Regional Community Colleges.

According to the Program Review Committee's Report,

> "THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE NECESSARY FOLLOW-UP AND OTHER APPROPRIATE INFORMATION ON TRANSFER, OCCUPATION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS BE AVAILABLE FOR DECISION MAKING."

Thus, the major goal of this study was to establish a cooperative systemwide activity by which the colleges' and the Central Office's informational needs were met with a minimum amount of duplication and a maximum amount of data collected.

Objectives

The survey of June 1975 graduates had six major objectives:

1. To establish a longitudinal data base on graduates of the Connecticut Community Colleges;

2. To identify selected biographical characteristics of Connecticut Community College graduates;

3. To identify educational/career objectives at the time of entry into a community college;

4. To investigate the attitudes of graduates toward their community college experience;

5. To establish a graduate feedback process, whereby, collected information is used for institutional decision-making concerned with the development of new programs or the deletion of obsolete programs; and,

6. To evaluate and reassess the stated objectives of the Regional Community College System.

PROCEDURES

The following section describes the study population, instrumentation, research questions, questionnaire administration procedures, and data processing analyses.

Study Population

The study population consisted of all students graduating in an associate degree program from Connecticut's Community Colleges during the 1974-75 academic year. The graduates officially received their degree in June 1975. Included in this population were students exiting in transfer, occupational or general curricula, whether they attended full- or part-time. In all, 2,911 graduates were included in the study population.

Instrumentation

A Research Advisory Committee was formed of designated individuals representing each of the colleges, and coordinated by the Director of Research & Projects of the Board's central office staff. The members of this committee formed their own college committees in order that relevant input information for use in developing the questionnaire could be solicited from faculty and administrators on the campuses.

The final version of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) was designed to elicit information concerning the graduates' post-college activities. Student follow-up surveys used in Maryland (Maryland State Board for Community Colleges, 1975) and Virginia (Virginia Department of Community Colleges, 1974) served as the basis for developing the questionnaire used in this study.

Research Questions

The following research questions are investigated in this report. The results and conclusions of this study address these questions, but were not limited to them.

1) What were the demographic characteristics of the community college graduates in terms of curriculum, credits earned, grade-point-average (GPA), sex, age, marital status, ethnic group, veteran, enrollment status?

2) What were the graduates' initial reasons for attending a community college? Did they change their curriculum while attending a community college? For what reason?

3) What were the graduates' employment experiences? Current status? Income? Relationship of program of study to job? Job satisfaction? Assistance of community college's educational program?

4) What were the graduates' transfer experiences? How many transferred? To where? From which curricula? How many credits were lost in transfer? Did the graduates feel academically prepared for additional academic work?

5) What was the graduates' degree of satisfaction with various aspects and services of their former community college?

Questionnaire Administration

The graduate follow-up study was a cooperative project involving the staffs of the individual colleges and the Board of Trustees for Community Colleges, each had separate responsibilities in the areas of distribution, collection, and processing of the instrument.

The Board contracted for commercial printing of the instrument. The questionnaires were distributed to the colleges in mid-October, 1975, for administration. The colleges received a sufficient number of questionnaires for an initial mailing and one follow-up mailing.

Each college constructed a master control list of graduates in order to monitor respondents, non-respondents, and non-deliverables. Using this procedure, mailing duplication was minimized.

The colleges completed the "For College Use Only" section upon receipt of the returned questionnaire. All usable forms were forwarded to the Board on a pre-arranged deadline date.

Data Processing

The Board prepared the completed forms for keypunching. The keypunching and verifying were done by the State of Connecticut Data Processing Department. The computer analyses were done at the University of Connecticut Computer Center by the Board's Director of Research & Projects using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results were generated for each college, and for the system.

RESULTS

This section will present the results of the analyses carried out on the graduate data. Presented first will be general demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by a discussion of the graduates' employment and transfer activities after leaving their community college. This section will conclude with a presentation of the graduates' attitudes toward the college's programs and services provided to the students.

Percentage of Returns

The observations made in this report are based upon 1,405 respondents (i.e. 48% of the total study population). There was no attempt made to follow-up or sample the non-respondents. Thus, all conclusions are limited to the returned data.

Table I presents the number and percentage of respondents by community college.

TABLE I

Number and Percentage of Respondents by College

College	Total Number of Graduates	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Response
Asnuntuck	61	37	61%
Greater Hartford	156	73	47%
Housatonic	291	147	51%
Manchester	520	278	45%
Mattatuck	408	169	41%
Middlesex	190	62	33%
Mohegan	198	136	69%
Northwestern	221	122	55%
Norwalk	297	165	56%
Quinebaug	61	60	98%
South Central	204	77	38%
Tunxis	204	82	40%
System Totals	2911	1405	48%

attended. The percentage of response ranged from 33 to 98 percent, with an overall rate of response of 48 percent.

*This number will vary according to the number answering a specific question.

Demographic and Scholastic Characteristics

Table 2 compares the percentage of respondents by total community college population for the characteristics of curriculum, sex, and ethnic group. The results indicate that the respondent group differs slightly from the study

TABLE 2

Curriculum, Sex, and Ethnic Characteristics of the Respondents and the Total Study Population

	Study Population		Respondents	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Curriculum:				
Transfer	718	24%	361	26%
General	652	23%	334	24%
Occupational	1,541	53%	708	50%
Sex:				
Male	1,401	48%	633	45%
Female	1,510	52%	772	55%
Ethnic:*				
White	2,618	90%	1,272	93%
Black	224	8%	59	4%
Other	69	2%	48	3%

population in all three characteristics. It seems that a higher percentage of women (55 percent compared to 52 percent) and whites (93 percent to 90 percent) responded to the questionnaire compared to the percentage represented in the study population. Also, a higher percentage of transfer and general studies students responded than were represented in the study population.

*Information in this table concerning race or minority status is probably based upon physical characteristics or place of origin and is used for statistics only. No implications concerning ability, educational background, social or economic status should be inferred.

Table 3 presents the age distribution of the respondents by their primary enrollment status. Rows 1 and 3 contain the column percentages, i.e., percentage of respondents within a specific age range. For example, in the 21 to 25 age range, 79 percent of the respondents attended primarily full-time and 21 percent per-time. Rows 2 and 4 contain the row percentages, i.e., the percentage or respondents by their primary enrollment status across all the age groups.

Looking first at the percentages for the total respondent group by age (Row 5), one can see that approximately 34 percent of the graduates were above the age of 26, while 25 percent were at or below the age of 20. These figures indicate that the community colleges are serving a diversity of students, from the recent high school graduate to the person who has entered college after working for a number of years.

TABLE 3

Crosstabulation of Graduates Who Attended College on a Full-Time or Part-Time Status by Age Distribution

Enrollment Status	Age:	Lo-20	21-25	26-40	41-55	56-Hi	Total
Full-Time	Column % (1)	97%	79%	39%	40%	61%	
	Row % (2)	35%	45%	14%	3%	3%	70%
Part-Time	Column % (3)	3%	21%	61%	60%	39%	
	Row % (4)	2%	28%	53%	14%	4%	30%
Total	(5)	25%	41%	26%	6%	2%	

Second, 70 percent of the respondents indicated that they attended college primarily on a full-time basis, while 30 percent attended primarily part-time. Examination of the row percentages (Rows 2 and 4) reveals that 80 percent of the full-time respondents were under age 26, while 70 percent of the part-time

respondents were above age 25. Thus it seems that unemployment, tight money, and an effort to improve job prospects have forced individuals already in the labor market back into school, at least on a part-time basis. These findings are extremely relevant to administrators in terms of flexibility in course offerings and scheduling.

The cross-tabulation between grade-point average and program area is exhibited in Table 4. The general requirements for obtaining an associate degree in community college transfer programs are the completion of 60-68 semester hours with a grade-point average of 2.00 or better, while in the career or general studies programs a grade-point average of 1.80 must be attained. One can see from the entries in Table 4 that 99 percent of the respondents had an average of 2.00 or higher upon graduation.

TABLE 4

Crosstabulation of Program Area

and Grade Point Average

Program Area	Cumulative Grade-Point Average				
	Below 2.00	2.00-2.4	2.5-2.9	3.0-3.4	3.5-4.0
Business	6	78	131	101	55
Health	-	13	35	27	14
Natural Science	-	-	3	1	-
Public Service	-	49	68	57	32
Liberal Arts	-	70	96	89	88
General	1	36	54	56	32
Total	7	246	387	331	221

Overall, there is a little variation in the percentage of students within a grade-average category across the six program areas. However, Liberal Arts and Sciences, had the highest percentage (52 percent) of respondents with an average of 3.00 or higher, whereas Business had the lowest percentage of respondents (43 percent) above 3.00.

Table 5 presents the number of respondents within a program area by their initial reason for enrolling in a community college. The responses indicate that approximately one-half of the graduates intended to transfer upon completion of their associate degree. Nearly 45 percent of the respondents indicated that they had entered a community college to help them gain full-time employment,

TABLE 5

Crosstabulation of Program Area
and Initial Reason for Enrolling
in a Community College

Program Area	Reason for Enrolling					
	Transfer	Full-Time Employment	Improve skills	Special Program	Take Some Courses & Trans.	Courses of Interest
Business	154	113	11	78	8	7
Health	10	20	-	62	2	-
Natural Science	3	-	-	2	-	-
Public Service	77	55	11	63	1	8
Liberal Arts	244	38	9	11	34	21
General	98	34	2	10	12	15
Total	586	260	33	266	57	51

to improve their job skills, or to train them in a specialized program. Note, more than 100 graduates responded that their initial intention was to take several courses before transferring or to enroll in courses of special interest,

instead they remained at the community college and completed their degree requirements.

The responses in Table 5 also reveal that graduates exiting in programs other than transfer curricula (Liberal Arts and Sciences) plan to continue their studies at other institutions. Of those who graduated in occupational-career curricula, one-third initially planned to continue their studies. The growth of occupational program in the 4-year colleges, the tight job-market, and the desire to increase one's earning potential have all contributed to the transfer intentions of the "occupational" graduate.

Approximately one-fourth of the respondents indicated that they had changed their curriculum while attending their community college (see Table 6). A change in career goals was selected by nearly one-half of the respondents as the primary reason for this change.

TABLE 6

Crosstabulation of Type of Curriculum Change and Reason for the Change

Type of Change	Reason for Change						
	Changed Career Goals	Counselor's Advice	Opportunities in Another Field	Low Achiev.	Dissat-isfaction	Other	Total
Occupational to Occupational	40	8	12	1	12	9	82
Occupational to Transfer	46	7	10	2	19	10	94
Transfer to Occupational	30	1	9	1	1	10	52
Transfer to Transfer	44	15	12	2	15	25	113
Total	160	31	43	6	47	54	341

Employment

Responses tabulated on the employment status of the graduates specify that nearly three-fourths of the respondents are currently employed, with the majority employed full-time. Of those who are employed, 44 percent are also continuing their education. Approximately 5 percent of the respondents indicated that they were unemployed and seeking employment. Table 7 contains a cross-tabulation of the number of students within a program area by their current employment status.

TABLE 7

Crosstabulation of Program Area and Current Employment Status

Program Area	Employment Status								
	FT Work	PT Work	FT Work & Student	PT Work & Student	Military	Homemaker	Unemployed	Student	Other
Business	167	18	69	41	1	5	18	42	13
Health	66	9	5	3	1	1	4	2	5
Natural Science	3	-	1	0	-	-	-	-	-
Public Service	69	20	49	22	1	4	14	31	5
Liberal Arts	58	20	50	71	5	13	13	108	9
General	38	4	30	28	2	3	11	50	7
Total	401	71	204	165	10	26	60	233	39

The number of employed graduates varied by program area. In each of the occupational areas (ie., Business, Health, Natural Science, and Public Service) at least 8 out of 10 respondents reported some kind of employment, while in Liberal Arts and Sciences and General Studies approximately one-half indicated that they were currently employed. Many of these graduates are not employed because they reported that they were currently students.

A cross-tabulation between employment status and ethnic group and sex is exhibited in Table 8. The tabled entries reveal that proportionally more black respondents are employed full-time (F/T Work + F/T Work and Student) than white respondents. Comparisons with other minority groups are difficult because of the small number of respondents in each group.

TABLE 8

Crosstabulation of Employment Status and Ethnic Group and Sex

	Employment Status									
Ethnic Group:	FT Work	PT Work	FT Work & Stud.	PT Work & Stud.	Mili-tary	Home-maker	Unem-ployed	Student	Other	Total
White	425	78	191	172	11	31	64	242	35	1249
Black	12	3	18	8	-	-	2	11	1	55
Oriental	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	4
Hispanic	3	1	4	1	-	-	-	5	2	16
Am. Indian	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Other	6	-	7	4	-	-	-	6	3	26
Sex:										
Male	169	15	157	97	9	-	30	124	24	625
Female	285	67	70	90	2	31	37	142	18	742

Men reported full-time employment more frequently than women (52 percent to 48 percent); however, a larger percentage of women are employed full-time 'only' (38 percent to 27 percent), while more men reported full-time employment and college attendence (25 percent to 9 percent). Four percent of the women considered themselves homemakers; no males responded in this category, perhaps next year.

The responses in Table 9 reflect the number of years the respondents have been employed by their employment status. Overall, 48 percent of the respondents have been working for less than one year, 36 percent for 1 to 5 years, and 16 percent have been employed at their present job for more than 5 years. These findings imply that a large percentage of community college graduates had returned to school to upgrade their skills, or perhaps be retrained in another area.

TABLE 9

Crosstabulation of Employment Status and Number of Years Employed

Number of Yrs. Employed	Employment Status					
	Full-Time Work	Part-Time Work	Full-Time Work & Student	Part-Time Work & Student	Other	Total
Less 1 Yr.	238	45	54	58	15	410
1-2 Yrs.	72	13	31	39	3	158
3-5 Yrs.	56	14	51	36	2	159
6-10 Yrs.	34	4	49	10	2	99
11 or More	16	-	19	5	1	41

Table 10 contains a cross-tabulation between current salary and program area; and, Table 11 presents a cross-tabulation between current salary and ethnic group and sex. The figures in Table 10 indicate that 13 percent of the respondents earn less than $5,000; 58 percent earn between $5,000 and $10,000,

while 11 percent earn more than $12,500. Of course, respondents who are currently employed part-time will inflate the lower categories.

TABLE 10

Crosstabulation of Program Area and Salary

Program Area	Salary								
	1-2499	2500-4999	5000-7499	7500-9999	10000-12499	12500-14999	15000-17499	17500-19999	20000-Hi
Business	-	25	103	48	32	15	12	4	6
Health	-	2	7	40	23	2	-	-	-
Natural Science	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-
Public Service	1	19	52	21	25	9	6	1	-
Liberal Arts	2	30	61	30	29	5	4	-	-
General	2	12	29	13	14	6	2	2	1
Total	5	88	255	152	123	38	24	7	7

Six out of ten respondents whose salary exceeds $15,000 were graduates in Business programs; however, 52 percent of the Business graduates earn less than $7,500. The largest number of responses in each program area was in the $5,000 to $7,499 salary range, which may indicate initial salary levels, or salaries of individuals who have been employed for less than one year.

The data from Table 11 show the salary levels of the different ethnic groups. A comparison of the percentage of blacks and whites in the various categories reveals a larger percentage of whites are earning less than $7,500 (53 percent to 34 percent), while more blacks (59 percent to 37 percent) are earning $7,500 to $12,499. Approximately equal percentages of whites (10 percent) and blacks (9 percent) earn above $12,500.

TABLE 11

Crosstabulation of Salary

by Ethnic Group and Sex

	Salary								
Ethnic Group:	LO 2499	2500- 4999	5000 7499	7500 9999	10000 12499	12500 14999	15000 17499	17500 19999	20000 HI
White	5 (1%)	96 (13%)	277 (39%)	149 (21%)	114 (16%)	36 (5%)	24 (3%)	8(1%)	7(1%)
Black	-	2 (6%)	10 (28%)	11 (31%)	10 (28%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	-	-
Oriental	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic	-	1	2	2	2	-	2	-	-
Am. Ind.	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	1	3	2	4	3	-	-	-
Sex:									
Male	-	27 (7%)	92 (25%)	76 (21%)	89 (25%)	38 (10%)	25 (7%)	8(2%)	7(2%)
Female	5 (1%)	75 (18%)	204 (48%)	90 (21%)	45 (11%)	3 (1%)	2	-	1

It is evident from the data concerning male-female salaries that females are clustered in the lower categories. Sixty-seven percent of the employed

females earn less than $7,500, compared to 32 percent of the males. At the other end of the scale, 46 percent of the males earn above $10,000 compared to 12 percent of the females.

Responses cross-tabulated in Table 12 indicate that six graduates in ten are employed in a job that is related to their community college program of study. Upon closer investigation of the tabled entries, the Liberal Arts and Sciences and General Studies graduates were found to have proportionally more unrelated responses than the occupational graduates.

TABLE 12

Crosstabulation of Program Area

and Job-School Relationship

Program Area	Relationship		
	Highly Related	Somewhat Related	Unrelated
Business	123	99	58
Health	72	3	6
Natural Science	1	1	2
Public Service	74	28	45
Liberal Arts	12	54	116
General	11	33	49
Total	293	218	276

Further comparisons between the program areas disclose that 78 percent of the occupational respondents are employed in a job that is related.

to their community college major compared to 40 percent of the Liberal Arts and General Studies respondents. The higher percentage of unrelated responses attained with the Liberal Arts and General Studies graduates may be explained by the divergent fields of study within these program areas, and the difficulty of matching that specific area to a job. Too, a large percentage (60 percent) of these respondents are also attending college; thus, they may be working at an unrelated job until they have completed their studies.

Table 13 contains a cross-tabulation between program area and the distance of employment from their community college. Of the 773 respondents to this question, 608 (79 percent) reported that they are employed within 25 miles of their former campus. The proportion of respondents within each mileage category are similar across all the program areas. These findings are not surprising considering that community colleges were developed to reflect the special needs of the citizenry within the regions they serve.

TABLE 13

Crosstabulation of Program Area

and Distance of Employment from Community College

Program Area	Approximate Distance			
	Up to 25 Mi.	25-49 Mi.	50-99 Mi.	100 Mi. & Over
Business	229	24	11	11
Health	46	16	10	8
Natural Science	3	1	-	-
Public Service	115	20	2	5
Liberal Arts	136	25	7	11
General	79	6	7	1
Total	608	92	37	36

Table 14 reveals that 4 graduates in 10 responded that their academic program enhanced their opportunities to get a job or in obtaining salary increases and promotions. Seventy percent indicated that their community college program increased their theoretical understanding of the skills required for their job, and also increased their ability to perform on the job.

TABLE 14

Distribution of Responses for
Assistance of Educational Program

Item	Yes	No
Obtaining Job	298 (45%)	369 (55%)
Obtaining Salary Increases	230 (38%)	379 (62%)
Increasing Theoretical Understanding	496 (70%)	211 (30%)
Increasing Job Skills	468 (67%)	228 (33%)

A secondary analysis on the respondents who had been working for less than one year indicated that the community college's educational program had assisted 65 percent of these graduates in obtaining their job. Thus, those graduates who have been on the job for a number of years answered negatively to this question, when perhaps they should have responded with not applicable.

The graduates were asked to respond to several items concerning job satisfaction (see Table 15). The largest percentage of respondents (27 percent) indicated that they were undecided, or neutral, concerning these aspects of

their job. The large number of neutral responses may be a result of those graduates who have been employed in their present job for less than one year (see Table 9).

TABLE 15

Distribution of Responses

Concerning Job Satisfaction

Item	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Salary	114 (13%)	120 (14%)	343 (40%)	185 (21%)	103 (12%)
Salary Incr.	137 (16%)	185 (22%)	246 (29%)	140 (16%)	145 (17%)
Advancement	148 (18%)	148 (18%)	243 (29%)	145 (17%)	161 (19%)
Job Enjoyment	266 (31%)	247 (29%)	213 (25%)	55 (6%)	75 (9%)
Fringe Benefits	228 (27%)	217 (26%)	184 (22%)	87 (10%)	132 (16%)
Job Importance	212 (25%)	240 (29%)	231 (28%)	72 (9%)	82 (10%)
Communication	292 (34%)	257 (30%)	173 (20%)	60 (7%)	73 (9%)
Total	1397 (23%)	1414 (24%)	1633 (27%)	744 (12%)	771 (13%)

Salary, and the possibility of advancement received the most dissatisfied responses (33 percent and 36 percent). While nearly 6 graduates in 10 responded favorably to the items concerning job enjoyment, fringe benefits, job importance, and communication with superiors.

Transfer

Graduate responses from the questionnaire's transfer section reveal that the respondents selected a diversity of educational institutions. Fifty-seven

percent of those who transfered are attending a state college or university, and 20 percent are attending a Connecticut private college. In addition, 13 percent left the state to attend college (See Table 16).

TABLE 16

Crosstabulation of Transfer Institution and Program Area

Institution	Program Area						Total
	Business	Health	Natural Science	Public Service	Liberal Arts	General	
Comm. College	2	-	-	1	4	2	9
Tech. College	1	-	-	-	1	3	5
State College & University	77	3	1	51	159	60	351
Ct. Private Col.	42	1	-	15	43	26	127
Out-of-State Public Col.	6	4	1	6	12	6	35
Out-of-State Private Col.	12	2	-	9	19	3	45
Other	14	-	-	6	15	13	48
Total	154	10	2	88	253	113	620

As was indicated earlier, graduates in programs other than transfer curricula continue their studies at other institutions. Students in occupational programs constitute 41 percent of all the transfer students, Liberal Arts and Sciences 41 percent, and General Studies 18 percent. These findings seem to indicate that the terms "transfer curriculum" and "occupational curriculum" are outdated. The curricula in the community colleges may be termed transfer or occupational depending upon individual student's goals and career objectives, thus, the term "comprehensive" may be more applicable.

The community college program of study was reported as being either directly or somewhat related to courses in the transfer institution by 85 percent of the respondents. The cross-tabulations contained in Table 17 reveal that 76 percent of the curriculum "unrelated" responses were from Liberal Arts and Sciences and General Studies graduates. Remember, similar findings were noted when matching employment to curriculum major.

TABLE 17

Crosstabulation of Program Area and Relationship of Current Curriculum with C.C. Field of Study

Institution	Relationship		
	Directly Related	Somewhat Related	Unrelated
Business	106	30	14
Health	5	5	-
Natural Science	1	-	1
Public Service	46	35	6
Liberal Arts	86	113	45
General	38	52	22
Total	282	235	88

When asked to indicate the degree of satisfaction with their community college preparation for additional academic work, 44 percent reported that they were extremely satisfied, 51 percent were satisfied, and 5 percent unsatisfied.

The degree of satisfaction among the respondents were similar whether they had transferred to a state or out-of-state college (see Table 18). Further, graduates did not indicate large losses of credit hours earned upon transfer (see Table 19). Sixty-five percent of the respondents had lost only 3 credit hours or less in transfer. A substantial part of the reported losses are attributed to a change in curriculum major.

TABLE 18

Crosstabulation of Transfer Institution
and Degree of Satisfaction with C.C. Preparation

Institution	Degree of Satisfaction		
	Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Comm. College	5	5	-
Tech. College	-	5	-
State College & University	169	200	16
Ct. Private Col.	63	71	5
Out-of-State Public Col.	22	16	2
Out-of-State Private Col.	20	30	2
Other	20	19	3
Total	299	346	28

TABLE 19

Crosstabulation of Transfer Institution and Number of Credits Lost in Transfer

Institution	Credits Lost					
	None	1-3	4-6	7-12	13-20	20+
Comm. College	2	2	3	-	-	1
Tech. College	1	-	-	1	1	2
State College & University	153	88	60	42	22	6
Ct. Private Col.	77	14	11	18	10	-
Out-of-State Public Col.	13	10	7	5	2	2
Out-of-State Private Col.	28	5	8	5	5	2
Other	11	1	3	1	-	6
Total	285	130	92	72	40	19

Graduates' Reactions to Community College Environment and Services

A major objective of this study was to investigate the attitudes of the graduates toward their community college experience, and to use this information for institutional decision-making concerned with the development of new programs or the deletion of obsolete programs. Table 20 presents the distribution of graduate responses concerning their degree of satisfaction with the quality of instruction, counseling, and college services.

Table 20

Distribution of Responses for Degree of Satisfaction with C.C. Environment & Services

Item	Degree of Satisfaction: Highly Satisfied #	%	Satisfied #	%	Neutral #	%	Dissatisfied #	%	Highly Dissatisfied #	%	No Experience With Item #	%
Quality of Instruction in General Education Courses	408	29	655	47	216	15	25	2	8	1	84	6
Quality of Instruction in Occupational Courses	363	26	432	31	141	10	36	3	10	1	414	30
Faculty Availability after Class	572	41	509	36	192	14	36	3	16	1	71	5
Faculty Interest in Students	608	44	478	34	215	15	41	3	18	1	36	3
Freshman Orientation Program	119	9	241	17	323	23	92	7	79	6	542	39
Availability of Financial Aid Info.	195	14	207	15	163	12	85	6	53	4	693	50
Registration Procedures	218	16	439	31	396	28	175	13	145	10	23	2
Advising for Program Selection	246	18	380	27	313	22	176	13	119	9	162	12
Career or Vocational Exploration	150	11	270	19	297	21	112	8	67	5	500	36
Counseling for Personal Problem(s)	198	14	188	13	157	11	45	3	38	3	770	55
Overall College Facilities	223	16	544	39	344	25	160	11	80	6	44	3
Student Influence in College Decisions	112	8	275	20	368	26	92	7	56	4	493	35
Variety of Student Extra-Curricular Activities	158	11	358	26	293	21	98	7	53	4	436	31
Your Academic Program	489	35	660	47	179	13	33	2	18	1	17	1

The tabular responses indicate a high degree of satisfaction among graduates with their academic program. Eight graduates in ten rated their program satisfactorily, and also rated the quality of instruction in their general academic and occupational courses very favorably with less than one respondent in ten rating the instructional quality as unsatisfactory. Nearly 80 percent of the respondents considered the faculty as being genuinely interested in their students. This finding certainly supports the contention that one of the major strenghts of the community college is the dedication and motivation of the faculty. The two items concerning the faculty were rated with the highest degree of satisfaction. On separate questions, it was found that 9 graduates in 10 would recommend their program of study to a friend, and 92 percent would recommend their college (Table 21).

Generally, the graduates rated the college's services very favorably, with the most dissatisfaction appearing in the items concerned with registration procedures (23 percent), advice for program selection (22 percent), and overall college facilities (17 percent). Several items received a large number of "No Experience With Item" responses, indicating that the graduates did not take advantage of these specific college services.

Such services as career or vocational exploration, counseling for personal problems, student influence in college decisions, freshman orientation program, financial aid information, and variety of student extra-curricular activities received the highest proportions of "No Experience"; however, these services tend to be personal in nature and would not necessarily be utilized by all students. Results indicated positive reactions for those students who did experience these services.

TABLE 21

Crosstabulation of Program Area
and Student Recommendation of Program

Program	Recommendation		
	Yes	No	Uncertain
Business	328	17	34
Health	78	5	13
Natural Science	5	-	-
Public Service	193	7	15
Liberal Arts	312	17	31
General	152	8	18
Total	1068	54	111

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was initiated by Connecticut's community colleges to gain information concerning the academic and demographic characteristics of their graduates; student employment experiences; student transfer experiences; and, graduate perceptions of the community college environment and services. The results will be used as part of a comprehensive assessment of the impact made by the community colleges on their local communities.

At the conclusion of this initial study, the community college system and the individual colleges will have a data base from which program planning and evaluative decisions could be made. This data base, updated each year, can also be used by the colleges' counseling staff in helping current and entering students make vocational or educational decisions. For the first time, the colleges have usable data on former students regarding their placement and performance after leaving college on a system-wide and on an individual college basis.

Summary of Findings

1. The rate of return across the 12 community colleges ranged from 33 to 98 percent, with an overall response rate of 48 percent. The demographic characteristics (i.e., curriculum, sex, ethnic group) of the respondent group differed slightly from the total study population.

2. The age distribution and enrollment status of the respondents indicated that the colleges are serving a diversity of students, from the recent high school graduate to the person who has entered college, on a part-time basis, after working for a number of years.

3. The graduates' initial reason for enrolling in a community college varied from obtaining a degree and transferring to job-retraining, and enrolling in special programs for employment purposes. Also, nearly 10 percent indicated that they had originally planned to take only several courses of interest, instead they remained at the community college and completed their degree requirements.

4. One-fourth of the respondents had changed curricula while attending college; the primary reason given for this curriculum change was a change in career goals. Thus, there seems to be a need to assist admission's counselors in their efforts at helping students make sound educational and career decisions, and help them realize their academic and career plans at an early stage in their college life.

5. Nearly three-fourths of the respondents are currently employed, with the majority employed full-time. Approximately 5 percent indicated that they were unemployed and seeking employment.

6. Six graduates in ten are employed in a job that is related to their community college program of study. Although, close scrutiny of the responses revealed that 8 out of 10 graduates from occupational programs are in 'related' employment.

7. Overall job satisfaction was rated superior or good by nearly half the respondents, another third rated it neutral. The large number of neutral responses may have been a result of those graduates who have been employed in their present job for less than one year.

8. Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they transferred. Students in occupational programs constituted 41 percent of all transfer students, the remaining students were in the Liberal Arts and Science and General Studies curricula. The term 'comprehensive' was suggested for use when referring to community college curricula instead of 'occupational' or 'transfer'. The individual student's goals seem to define the type of curriculum that he/she is enrolled in.

9. The responses to the evaluative questions indicated a high degree of satisfaction among the graduates with the college's services and academic program. The large majority (90 percent) would recommend their program of study to a friend, and 92 percent would recommend their college. Overall, it is evident that the graduates have a very favorable attitude toward their community college education.

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CONNECTICUT REGIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

SURVEY OF COLLEGE GRADUATES

WINTER 1975

APPENDIX D

Connecticut Regional Community Colleges
Board of Trustees

Dear Graduate:

In order to properly assess the curricular offerings and student services in Connecticut's Community Colleges, it is necessary that we have information concerning the post-graduation activities and experiences of our graduates. We would like to enlist your cooperation by asking you to complete this questionnaire. Your assistance will help us improve and modify our existing services, and help to establish public confidence and support among citizens, legislators and executives in government. It will be necessary to have your name to properly complete the college academic data. Please be assured that all information will be treated as strictly confidential, and no attempt will be made to relate responses to the persons participating in the study.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed and stamped return envelope within three days.

Thank you for your help.

Very truly yours,

Searle F. Charles
Executive Director
Connecticut Regional Community Colleges

FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY

1. College Code:_____
2. Curriculum Regis #_____
3. Total Credits Earned_____
4. Highest Degree Received:
   1. Associate Degree
   2. Certificate
5. Overall G.P.A._____

DIRECTIONS:

USE PENCIL ONLY. CIRCLE THE NUMBER OPPOSITE THE ITEM THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR ANSWER. COMPLETELY ERASE ANY ANSWER YOU WISH TO CHANGE. PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

SECTION 1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS REQUESTED TO AID THE COLLEGE IN EVALUATING ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

1. Please circle the appropriate sex designation for yourself.
   1. male
   2. female
2. Please state your year of birth: _____
3. Your marital status.
   1. single
   2. married
   3. other
4. You consider yourself as belonging to which of the following groups:
   1. white
   2. black or afro-american
   3. oriental
   4. spanish surnamed american
   5. american indian
   6. other_____
5. Veteran
   1. yes
   2. no

SECTION 2. EDUCATIONAL GOALS UPON ENTRY TO THIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE (ALL GRADUATES PLEASE RESPOND TO THESE ITEMS)

6. How many semesters did you attend before achieving your degree? (Do not include summer sessions)
   at this community college_____
   at another college_____
7. How many summer sessions did you attend?

   _____summer sessions
8. Did you attend this community college primarily on a part-time or full-time basis?

   1. part-time (less than 12 credit hours)
   2. full-time (12 or more credit hours)

9. Please circle the number corresponding to your one primary reason for initially enrolling in this community college.
   1. to obtain an associate degree before transfering
   2. to obtain an associate degree; no further immediate educational plans
   3. to obtain a certificate to improve or upgrade skills
   4. to obtain training in a special program for employment
   5. to take some college level courses befor- transfering
   6. to take some liberal arts & science courses which interest me
   7. to take one or several courses of special interest

10. Did you at any time change from one curriculum to another while at this community college?
   1. yes
   2. no

11. Indicate below what type of curriculum change you made. Note, occupational refers to a two-year career program, while transfer refers to Liberal Arts and Sciences or other specific transfer programs.
   1. from an occupational curriculum to another occupational curriculum
   2. from an occupational curriculum to a transfer curriculum
   3. from a transfer curriculum to an occupational curriculum.
   4. from a transfer curriculum to another transfer curriculum

12. If your answer to Question 10 was Yes, please circle the primary reason for changing your curriculum as noted below.
   1. changed career goals
   2. counselor's advice
   3. more opportunity in another field
   4. low achievement
   5. dissatisfied with curriculum
   6. other (specify) _____

SECTION 3. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

13. Circle the one item that best describes your present employment or related status.
   1. full-time employment (not attending school)
   2. part-time employment (not attending school)
   3. full-time employment (attending school)
   4. part-time employment (attending school)
   5. military service
   6. homemaker
   7. unemployed (looking for employment)
   8. student (not employed)
   9. other (specify) _____

IF YOU HAVE CIRCLED RESPONSES 5-8, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION 4, QUESTION 25.

14. Did you have to relocate to find your present employment?
   1. yes
   2. no

15. Indicate the approximate distance of your present employment from your former community college.
   1. up to 25 miles
   2. 25-49 miles
   3. 50-99 miles
   4. 100 miles and over

16. How long have you been employed at your present job?
   1. less than 1 year
   2. 1-2 years
   3. 3-5 years
   4. 6-10 years
   5. 11 or more years

17. Indicate the most accurate relationship between your program at this community college and your job.
   1. program directly related to job
   2. program somewhat related to job
   3. program not at all related to job

18. If your present job is not related to your community college program, please circle the primary reason.
   1. could not find job in field of preparation
   2. found better job in another field
   3. qualified for new job by continuing my education
   4. was not sufficiently qualified for a job in my field of college preparation as determined by the prospective employer
   5. other (specify) _____

19. Please indicate your occupational category.
   1. unskilled worker
   2. semi-skilled worker
   3. service worker
   4. skilled worker or craftsman
   5. salesman, bookkeeper, salesclerk, secretary
   6. owner, manager small bus., jr. executive
   7. profession requiring bachelor or advanced degree
   8. owner, executive large bus., high-level government official
   9. homemaker

20. What is your job title?

   _____

21. Please indicate your present yearly or hourly salary.
   yearly salary _____
   hourly salary _____

22. How did you locate your first job after leaving this community college?
   1. faculty at this college
   2. this community college's placement office
   3. employment agency
   4. family or friend
   5. held same job while attending college
   6. other (specify) _____

23. On the scale to the right of each statement, please check (X) the degree to which you are satisfied with your present job.

	Highly Satisfied 5	4	3	2	Highly Dissatisfied 1
salary	_	_	_	_	_
opportunities for salary increases	_	_	_	_	_
opportunities for advancement	_	_	_	_	_
job enjoyment	_	_	_	_	_
fringe benefits	_	_	_	_	_
job importance	_	_	_	_	_
communication with superiors	_	_	_	_	_

24. Did your educational program at this community college assist you in:

	Yes 1	No 2	Not Applicable 3
obtaining your job	_	_	_
obtaining salary increases and/or promotions	_	_	_
increasing your theoretical understanding of skills required for your job	_	_	_
increasing your abilities to perform skills required by your job	_	_	_

SECTION 4. IF YOU HAVE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION, PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONS 25 THROUGH 30, OTHERWISE SKIP TO SECTION 5, QUESTION 31.

25. Please indicate the type of institution to which you transfered to after leaving this community college.
1. another connecticut community college
2. a connecticut technical college
3. a connecticut state college or university
4. a connecticut private 4-year college or university
5. out-of-state 4-year public college or university
6. out-of-state 4-year private college
7. other (specify) _____

26. Please circle your primary reason for continuing your education.
1. to prepare for further job opportunities in my present occupation
2. to improve my skills and abilities in my present job
3. for my own general education and personal satisfaction
4. to change my occupation
5. it is expected of me by my employer
6. other (specify) _____

27. Is your present curriculum related to your community college field of study?
1. yes, very much
2. yes, somewhat
3. no, or very little

28. Please indicate your current enrollment status?
1. full-time
2. part-time

29. Please indicate the degree of satisfaction to which you feel this community college prepared you for additional academic work.
1. extremely satisfactorily
2. satisfactorily
3. unsatisfactorily

30. How many credit hours earned at this community college were not accepted toward your degree at the institution you are currently attending?
1. all credit hours accepted
2. lost 1-3 credit hours
3. lost 4-6 credit hours
4. lost 7-12 credit hours
5. lost 13-20 credit hours
6. lost more than 21 credit hours.

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SECTION 5. ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES OF THIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

31. The following items describe aspects and services of this community college. On the scale to the right of each statement, please check (X) the degree to which you were satisfied. The scale is defined as follows:

HIGHLY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	DISSATISFIED	HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	NO EXPERIENCE WITH ITEM
5	4	3	2	1	0

Note: If you have had no, or very little, experience with an item, you should mark (X) under 0 - No Experience with item.

	HIGHLY SATISFIED 5	4	3	2	HIGHLY DISSATISFIED 1	NO EXPERIENCE WITH ITEM 0
quality of instruction in general education courses	–	–	–	–	–	–
quality of instruction in occupational courses	–	–	–	–	–	–
faculty availability after class	–	–	–	–	–	–
faculty interest in students	–	–	–	–	–	–
freshman orientation program	–	–	–	–	–	–
availability of financial aid info.	–	–	–	–	–	–
registration procedures	–	–	–	–	–	–
advising for program selection	–	–	–	–	–	–
career or vocational exploration	–	–	–	–	–	–
counseling for personal problem(s)	–	–	–	–	–	–
overall college facilities	–	–	–	–	–	–
student influence in college decisions	–	–	–	–	–	–
variety of student extra-curricular activities	–	–	–	–	–	–
your academic program	–	–	–	–	–	–

32. Would you recommend to a friend your program of study at this community college?
1. yes
2. no
3. uncertain

33. Would you recommend this community college to a friend?
1. yes
2. no
3. uncertain

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION